

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
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1. [World Uniting around Insistence that Libya's Qadhafi Must Go](#) (05-12-2011)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — International cooperation has increased the pressure on Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi's regime and made it harder for it to carry out attacks against the Libyan people, a senior State Department official says, adding that the Obama administration will continue its efforts to support the Libyan people through economic, military and political means.

Speaking to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee May 12, Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg said that through the imposition of a no-fly zone, an arms embargo, the freezing of assets and travel bans, the international community is sending a clear message to Qadhafi and his regime that "there's no going back to the way things were."

"The international community is increasingly united around a shared insistence that Qadhafi must go," Steinberg said.

Libya's National Oil Corporation and central bank have been "blacklisted," he said. The financial sanctions have deprived Qadhafi's regime of funds and assets it could use to suppress the Libyan people.

Steinberg said the regime was forced to halt its oil exports and is having difficulty obtaining refined petroleum. In addition, he said there are indications that “the regime can no longer afford to pay its supporters to attend rallies and demonstrations.”

The Obama administration and other governments plan to take further unilateral steps to “tighten the squeeze on regime officials and regime-affiliated banks, businesses and satellite networks,” Steinberg said.

At the same time it is denying support to the Qadhafi regime, the United States is supporting Libya’s main opposition group, the Transitional National Council, with up to \$25 million worth of nonlethal aid, including medical supplies, boots, tents, rations and personal protective gear, he said.

Steinberg also said the United States is providing more than \$53 million in humanitarian assistance in Libya and is continuing to look for additional ways to support humanitarian operations in the country.

Following the Arab League’s March 12 call for a no-fly zone and arms embargo against Libya, [which was endorsed by the United Nations Security Council](#), the United States initially took the lead in enforcing the military effort, but its role since has evolved to primarily offering support to NATO, which assumed command of the operation.

“Of the over 6,000 sorties flown in Libya, three-quarters have been flown by non-U.S. coalition partners. All 20 ships enforcing the arms embargo are European or Canadian, and the overwhelming majority of strike sorties are now being flown by our European allies,” Steinberg said.

The Senate committee chairman, Senator John Kerry, said that when the military action began against Qadhafi’s forces, the Libyan people were facing a humanitarian catastrophe, and the international effort has now given them “a fighting chance for a better future.”

He also said failure to take action would have allowed Qadhafi to demonstrate that violence is an effective means of crushing political dissent.

“I think the message across the Arab world, across North Africa and into the Middle East would have been significantly damaging to the aspirations of the Arab Spring and to other interests that we have,” Kerry said.

2. Syrian Crackdown Shows Government’s Weakness, Clinton Says (05-12-2011)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton described the Syrian government’s continued crackdown on its political opponents as “brutal” and said the violent response of President Bashar al-Assad’s regime against its own citizens is a sign of weakness, rather than strength.

Speaking in Nuuk, Greenland, May 12 with Danish Foreign Minister Lene Espersen, Clinton said hundreds of Syrians have been killed since protesters began peacefully calling for political reforms and greater freedoms in March. Clinton and Espersen were in Greenland for a meeting of the Arctic Council.

The Syrian government is engaging in “unlawful detention and torture and the denial of medical care to wounded persons,” Clinton said. “There may be some who think that this is a sign of strength, but treating one’s own people in this way is, in fact, a sign of remarkable weakness.”

Violence will not solve Syria’s political and economic challenges, Clinton said. The increasingly isolated Assad regime’s reliance upon Iran for support “is not a viable way forward.”

The unrest and the violent crackdown have made it clear that Syria “cannot return to the way it was before,” Clinton said. Its future security and stability will come through a government that “reflects the popular will of all of the people and protects their welfare.”

The United States is working with other countries to hold Syrian officials accountable for “gross human rights abuses,” including building a strong case to “sanction those who are leading and implementing the policies that are coming from the government,” she said.

Foreign Minister Espersen called on Syria’s government to deliver on its public promises that it will enact political reforms and engage in a national dialogue to address its citizens’ concerns.

She said Denmark is among the European Union nations calling for sanctions against Syria and that it is prepared to tighten its restrictions against the Syrian regime if it fails to fulfill its promises of reform.

White House press secretary Jay Carney told reporters in Washington May 12 that the Obama administration has consistently condemned violent responses by Syria and other governments in the region to political unrest and strongly urges them to engage their citizens and make political reforms.

By answering the aspirations of their people, and responding to their demands for greater political participation and economic prosperity, those governments “will find the stability that they claim they seek, because further repression will lead only to further and greater instability,” Carney said.

3. Ambassador Rice at U.N. Security Council Stakeout on Syria (05-11-2011)

Remarks by Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at the Security Council Stakeout on Syria, May 11, 2011

Ambassador Rice: Good afternoon, everyone. I just wanted to comment briefly on the decision taken today by Syria to withdraw its candidacy for the Human Rights Council. We believe that this is the result of the good sense of the member states of the Asia Group, who determined that they were unwilling to lend sufficient support to a country whose human rights record is deplorable and who is in the process of killing its own people on the streets, arresting thousands, and terrorizing a population that is seeking to express itself through largely peaceful means.

We think that this is a welcome step, an important step, and is one in a series of recent steps that have indicated that the trend line for the performance of both the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council — and the General Assembly in relation to the Human Rights Council — is beginning to move in a more positive direction. We note this decision, we note the decision to suspend Libya’s membership in the wake of what has transpired there. We also note the decision of the Human Rights Council to establish a special rapporteur for Iran, to establish a commission of

inquiry for Syria, as well as to take appropriate steps in the case of Cote D'Ivoire. And we think all of these are indications that the Human Rights Council has the potential to begin to live up to its purposes.

Happy to take a couple questions.

Reporter: Will the Security Council be able to catch up with this trend in regard to Syria, Yemen and Bahrain?

Ambassador Rice: Well — speaking for the United States, we have been very clear and consistent and forceful in our condemnations of all attacks by governments on innocent civilians who are seeking simply to express their legitimate aspirations for greater freedom, greater economic opportunity, and a better future. And we have done so consistently. This Council has acted robustly in certain instances and been unable to reach consensus in other instances. I think that is in part a function of the fact that each of these are different cases, that each member of the Council perceives them differently and has different interests. And I have, when asked about whether one data point or two create a trend line, I have said in my judgment, I don't think so. And I don't want to predict what, if anything, may come subsequently from this Council. We will continue, as the United States, our very clear and forceful condemnation of what's transpired in Syria and Yemen and elsewhere.

In the case of Syria, we have ourselves imposed significant additional sanctions, as has the European Union. And we'll continue to have consultations with our colleagues and partners here in New York about appropriate potential next steps.

Reporter: Ambassador, do you think that countries should be more democratic than Kuwait to be members? And what about, what's your comment on Syria running in 2013?

Ambassador Rice: Well on the second point, let's see where we are in '13, and what they in fact intend to do. We are a week out from the elections this year and much has changed in the last twelve hours. So I think predictions are premature. And I don't want to get into commentary on each of the 191 other members' human rights records, but suffice it to say that we think that Kuwait standing on the Asia slate and representing the Arab group is a very positive step.

Reporter: Concerning the issue of Syria at the Security Council, would it be better to have a resolution presented so that we could see who is voting, not voting, to make it clear who is blocking on the issue?

Ambassador Rice: What we think is most important is that there be no ambiguity about the international outrage and condemnation at the behavior of the Syrian government. And we think today's action in the Asia group underscored that, and we think that whatever the Council does ought to underscore that. Thank you.

4. Assistant Secretary Posner on Human Rights in Iran (05-11-2011)

U.S. Department of State, Testimony by Michael H. Posner, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Philo L. Dibble, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

Statement before Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs, Washington, DC

Human Rights and Democratic Reform in Iran

Chairman Casey, Ranking Member Risch, Distinguished Members of the Committee: thank you for inviting us to appear before you today to discuss the Iranian government's continuing and worsening abuses against its own people.

Almost two years after Iran's disputed presidential election, Iranian authorities continue to harass, arbitrarily detain, torture and imprison their citizens, as well as some of ours. Their targets include those who demand accountability from their government and who stand up for the rights of their fellow citizens; ethnic and religious minorities; journalists, bloggers and students. Unfortunately, the situation has only further deteriorated in the first months of 2011 as compared with last year: protestors were killed in Tehran in February and in ethnically-Arab areas in April; the reduction of prison sentences for seven Baha'i leaders from 20 years to 10 was reversed; additional sentences were levied on those already in prison merely for sending letters to family members; political prisoners are held in deplorable conditions with convicted murderers in former stockyards; those released from prison are forced to pay exorbitant bail sums; a Jewish woman and her Armenian-Christian husband were reportedly executed based on undisclosed charges; mass executions of mainly ethnic minority prisoners have been carried out without their families' knowledge; Iran has executed at least 135 people this year, more than any other country in the world except China; restrictions on speech have intensified; journalists and bloggers continue to be targeted by the regime for daring to write the truth; teachers and other workers are harassed and incarcerated when they seek freedom of association and payment of wages owed; trade union leaders remain imprisoned on questionable charges; politically-active students have been banned from universities; and entire university faculties deemed un-Islamic have been forced to close their doors.

Particularly troubling is the deepening persecution of religious minorities. On May 1, the Revolutionary Court in the northern city of Bandar Anzali tried 11 members of the Church of Iran, including Pastor Abdolreza Ali-Haghejad and Zainab Bahremend, the 62-year-old grandmother of two other defendants, on charges of "acting against national security." On September 22, 2010, Christian pastor Youcef Nadarkhani was given a death sentence for apostasy although, according to human rights groups, this sentence is against Iranian law. Another pastor could be sentenced to death later this year. In March, over 200 Gonabadi Sufis were summoned to courts around the country based on allegations that they were insulting Iranian authorities. In April, eight other Sufis were re-arrested on charges of disrupting public order – charges for which they had been punished with flogging and imprisonment.

Iran's leaders continue to signal to their citizens that criticism will not be tolerated, while selectively applauding protestors in other countries in the region. As the country's economic situation deteriorates, workers are arrested when they protest for back wages, only to have authorities deny that strikes are taking place. At the same time the Iranian government was claiming influence in shaping popular unrest in the Arab world last month, its security forces arrested over 200 of its own people and three protestors died at the hands of authorities. While it decries crackdowns against protesters in Bahrain, it defends and assists the Syrian government's repression of protesters in Syria. Though Iranian leaders continue trying to portray regional events as inspired by the 1979 Islamic revolution, we are confident that the people of the Arab world will recognize those statements for the opportunistic falsehoods they are.

As Iran's leaders have increased their repressive tactics, we have increased the scope of our efforts aimed at challenging the Iranian government's deplorable human rights violations. President Obama and Secretary Clinton continue to speak out on behalf of the hundreds of victims in Iran who suffer

at the hands of their government. Other world leaders have done the same. We have designated 10 Iranian officials for serious human rights abuses in accordance with the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability and Divestment Act and, as the act requires, we are actively seeking more information on possible targets.

Following these designations, we engaged our European partners on ways to strengthen our collective voice, express solidarity with victims of torture, persecution, and arbitrary detention, and amplify the effect of our asset freezes and travel bans against Iranian officials. We welcomed the European Union's April 11 decision to sanction 32 Iranian officials, and have begun working with other partners to explore similar actions. We immediately imposed travel bans on the additional individuals not designated by the United States. While the U.S. and EU human rights sanctions regimes have different evidentiary standards, we are working closely together to share information on possible targets.

We continue to urge more nations to join our call to shine a spotlight on Iran's gross violations of human rights in bilateral and multilateral settings. We successfully kept Iran off of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) and helped win passage of a Canadian-led resolution condemning Iran's human rights abuses by the largest margin in eight years. At the March session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, we led a successful effort to establish a Special Rapporteur on Iran – the first country-specific human rights rapporteur created since the Council came into being. This historic action sent an unmistakable signal to Iran's leaders that the world will bear witness to their systematic abuse of their own citizens' human rights. More importantly, the Special Rapporteur will serve as a critical voice for those Iranians being persecuted for their political, religious, and ethnic affiliations. We have also urged other countries to press Iran on its abuses in their bilateral diplomacy.

Our efforts to address Iran's human rights abuses have been consistent and sustained. We often work behind the scenes in order to increase our effectiveness. We also continue to work quietly with civil society organizations in Iran to give them the tools they need to expand political space and hold their government accountable. Just as we do throughout the region, we provide training and tools to civil society activists to foster freedom of expression and the free flow of information on the Internet and via other communication technologies.

We believe that Internet Freedom is essential to 21st century democracy promotion. Our Internet freedom programming, which is a priority for Secretary Clinton, is aimed at making sure the voices for peaceful democratic reform — in Iran and around the region — can be heard. We have spent \$22 million on Internet freedom programming to date, and have notified Congress of our intent to spend \$28 million more this spring. Countering Iran's increasingly active Internet surveillance and censorship efforts requires a diverse portfolio of tools and training. State Department grants will support more advanced counter-censorship technologies, including circumvention tools in Farsi, secure mobile communications, and technologies to enable activists to post their own content online and protect against cyber attacks. We also have trained 5,000 activists worldwide — including Iranians — in cyber-self defense. And we plan to expand these efforts to teach democratic activists, journalists, bloggers, human rights defenders and others how to protect their online privacy and their data — so that they in turn can train others.

One of our grantees has just developed a mobile panic button that works on the kind of inexpensive cell phones used in much of the world. Pushing the button alerts others that an activist has been assaulted or arrested — a sad necessity in an era when official abductions and disappearances are all too common. Activists around the world have told us that when police come to break up pro-democracy protests, they often grab demonstrators' mobile phones in order to track down their

contacts. Within a few months, we also expect to have software that will wipe the contact lists from mobile phones with the push of a button.

Countering Iran's increasingly active Internet surveillance and censorship efforts requires a diverse portfolio of tools and training. We are finalizing new global grants for projects that will support digital safety and capacity building training, counter-censorship technology, virtual communication, and peer-to-peer technologies. No single tool will overcome the Iranian government's repressive Internet efforts, and that is why we have invested in incubating a diverse portfolio of technologies and digital safety training. This way, even if one particular tool is blocked, other tools will still be available. Likewise, we work to prevent the Iranian government from acquiring sensitive technology to repress its citizens.

Despite growing international consensus and a resounding condemnation of the Iranian government's actions, the regime continues to turn a deaf ear to the aspirations of its own citizens. But there is hope. Hundreds of brave Iranian citizens continue to engage in the most basic of human rights work, documenting and reporting on abuses, with the hope that one day Iranian government officials will be held accountable for crimes they have committed against their fellow citizens. Along with our international partners, we will continue to draw attention to these and other abuses and call on the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran to respect the universal rights enshrined in Iran's constitution and enumerated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a signatory.

5. U.S. Makes Progress Toward World Without Nuclear Weapons (05-10-2011)

By MacKenzie C. Babb
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration has dedicated “unprecedented financial, political and technical resources to prevent proliferation” and is making progress in moving toward a world without nuclear weapons, says Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher.

“We have achieved the entry into force of the New START agreement, adopted a nuclear posture review that promotes nonproliferation and reduces the role of nuclear weapons in our national security policy, and we helped to achieve a consensus action plan at the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review,” Tauscher said May 10 at the Arms Control Association's annual meeting in Washington.

Other administration efforts include convening the successful 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, helping to secure and relocate vulnerable nuclear materials, and increasing effective multilateral sanctions against Iran and North Korea for illegal nuclear activity, Tauscher added.

Tauscher praised in particular the February entry into force of the New START treaty, a U.S.-Russia agreement that will reduce each nation's nuclear arsenals to their lowest levels in more than a half century.

Tom Collina, research director at the Arms Control Association, said the treaty has worldwide benefits, including building a “global movement to stop other nations from getting nuclear weapons” and thus decrease the international threat of nuclear terrorism.

To further eliminate that threat, Tauscher said, the Obama administration is preparing for the next steps in nuclear arms reduction, including “reductions in strategic, nonstrategic and nondeployed weapons.”

The New START treaty “opened the door” for passage of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which Tauscher said the United States has taken a leading role to support. She said the international treaty, which prohibits nuclear explosions in all environments for military or civilian purposes, will enhance U.S. security.

The United States has signed the treaty, but the U.S. Senate has not yet ratified it. Tauscher said the Obama administration is preparing to engage the Senate and the American public in an educational campaign expected to lead to ratification. She said the United States no longer needs to conduct nuclear explosive tests.

The United States has observed a moratorium on nuclear testing since 1992, and U.S. officials say the country has no plans to resume. Tauscher added that for 15 years the secretaries of defense and energy and directors of nuclear weapons laboratories have certified the U.S. arsenal is “safe, secure and effective.”

“Each year, we have affirmed that we do not need to conduct explosive nuclear tests,” Tauscher said.

She said the treaty, if entered into force, would “obligate other states not to test and provide disincentives for states” that do continue to test.

The global community has a “robust verification regime” to catch those who would try to cheat the treaty, and would be prepared to levy “significant costs” to those countries, including international sanctions, she said.

Looking ahead, Tauscher said ratifying the treaty could help enhance international cooperation, strengthen U.S. leverage with the international community in pressuring defiant regimes that engage in illegal nuclear activity, and allow for greater U.S. credibility when encouraging other states to pursue nonproliferation objectives.

6. Obama Says Benefits Outweighed Risks in Getting bin Laden (05-09-2011)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama said he ordered the commando raid that ended with the death of al-Qaida terrorist leader and mass murderer Osama bin Laden knowing that deadly force might be necessary for the man who had eluded justice for a decade after the September 11, 2001, attack on the United States that killed nearly 3,000 people from almost 90 nations.

In a May 8 interview on CBS News’ 60 Minutes, Obama said he knew the risks of sending in a U.S. Navy special operations team on evidence that “was not absolutely conclusive,” but it was the best way to be certain of finding bin Laden.

“I felt that the risks were outweighed by the potential benefit of us finally getting our man,” Obama told CBS.

“The fact of the matter is this was somebody who was deserving of the justice that he received,” the president said. “Bin Laden had been not only a symbol of terrorism, but a mass murderer who had eluded justice for so long.”

While the risks associated with a raid of this kind would be enormous under most conditions, Obama said he had confidence in the abilities of the special operations team.

The Navy commando team, commonly known as SEALs for “Sea, Air and Land,” was flown by helicopter to the walled compound in Abbottabad, a small town near Islamabad, Pakistan. In the fight to take the house and its occupants, bin Laden was shot and killed by the commandos.

White House press secretary Jay Carney told reporters at a May 3 press briefing that bin Laden and his family were found on the second and third floors of the building. “There was concern that bin Laden would oppose the ... operation ... and, indeed, he did resist,” Carney said. “The resistance was throughout.”

The commando team had the authority from the president to kill bin Laden unless he surrendered, Carney said, and they were required to accept his surrender if they could do so safely.

Obama said in the 60 Minutes interview that he and members of his Cabinet, national security staff and senior U.S. military officers monitored the entire 40-minute commando raid from the White House Situation Room, hearing much of what was said during the operation. The commando team used photographs of bin Laden and facial analysis to confirm that it was the terrorist, but scientific DNA testing afterward absolutely confirmed that it was bin Laden, the president said.

“There’s no doubt that bin Laden is dead,” Obama said. “Certainly, there’s no doubt among al-Qaida members that he is dead.” The terrorist group confirmed May 6 on its websites that their leader was killed by the United States in the May 1 raid.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said May 2 that “even as we mark this milestone, we should not forget that the battle to stop al-Qaida and its syndicate of terror will not end with the death of bin Laden.”

Clinton said the United States will continue to boost its counterterrorism efforts and cooperation with other nations, including Pakistan. The United States is committed to supporting the people and government of Pakistan, and defending its people and democracy from violent extremism, she added.

[Osama bin Laden’s Death Pivotal in Shift to Peace, Leaders Say](#) (05-10-2011)

7. Biden: U.S., China Relationship Will Shape 21st Century (05-09-2011)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — As U.S. and Chinese leaders meet in Washington for the third U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, Vice President Biden said that given the importance of the world’s two largest economies’ cooperation on trade issues, climate change, security and other challenges, their relationship will help shape the 21st century.

Speaking May 9 in Washington with Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan, Chinese State Counselor Dai Bingguo, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, [Biden said](#) the annual dialogues, begun in 2009, are held to “build a relationship across the entire spectrum of our governments” and address “some of the defining problems of our time.”

“How we cooperate will define in significant part how we deal with the challenges the world faces in the beginning of the 21st century,” Biden said.

The vice president noted that the United States and China are the world’s largest producers and consumers of energy, a fact that poses a common challenge as well as a “great opportunity for common efforts to find clean-energy solutions.”

Biden said both sides need to work together to find where their mutual interests converge, but will also need to discuss areas of “vigorous disagreement,” such as human rights.

The Obama administration strongly believes that the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms — as defined in China’s international commitments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and specified in China’s own constitution — is “the best way to promote long-term stability and prosperity of any society,” he said.

In her remarks, [Clinton said](#) the United States will continue to discuss its differences with China over human rights “honestly and forthrightly,” as friends do.

She expressed concern over reports that public interest lawyers, writers, artists and others have disappeared or been detained by Chinese authorities, and said U.S. officials worry about the impact of China’s human rights practices “on our domestic politics and on the politics and the stability in China and the region.”

“We know over the long arch of history that societies that work toward respecting human rights are going to be more prosperous, stable and successful,” she said.

The secretary said both countries must work to better understand each other and build trust in order to avoid fears and misperceptions that some of their citizens have of each other.

“Some in our country see China’s progress as a threat to the United States. Some in China worry that America seeks to constrain China’s growth. We reject both those views. We both have much more to gain from cooperation than from conflict,” Clinton said.

“A thriving America is good for China and a thriving China is good for America. But to work together, we need to be able to understand each other’s intentions and interests. And we must demystify long-term plans and aspirations,” she said.

[Clinton Says U.S.-China Dialogue Is Building Mutual Trust](#) (05-10-2011)

8. U.S. Officials Praise Strength of Security Ties with Europe (05-06-2011)

By MacKenzie C. Babb
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States and its European allies have created a global alliance against terror that leaders should continue to enhance to prevent future attacks, according to senior U.S. security officials.

Ambassador Daniel Benjamin, the State Department's coordinator for counterterrorism, and Deputy Assistant Homeland Security Secretary Mark Koumans testified before a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee May 5.

"The magnitude and breadth of the terrorist challenge makes clear that no country or organization can defeat it alone. And the United States will ... continue to work closely with our partners around the world, especially our capable and willing European allies, to identify areas where further work remains to be done and how we can further collaborate ever more effectively," Benjamin said, adding that "only through such cooperation can we succeed."

He emphasized the importance of information sharing and collaboration in working to combat terrorism, and said the United States and the European Union are committed to fostering such cooperation.

Benjamin said U.S. counterterrorism work with Europe "spans the globe," highlighting U.S.-NATO cooperation on stability in Afghanistan and "vital" joint work to strengthen governance and the capabilities of regional partners to deny terrorists a safe haven.

Both Benjamin and Koumans discussed the May 1 death of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, calling it an important strategic success not just for the United States, but for the world. Bin Laden was killed when U.S. military forces launched an operation against the compound in which he was hiding in Abbottabad, Pakistan. President Obama, [in a televised address to the American people May 1](#), said that after a brief firefight, the special operations forces killed bin Laden and took custody of his body.

Koumans recognized statements of support for the operation from European leaders, including European Union Commission President José Manuel Barroso and EU Counterterrorism Coordinator Gilles de Kerchove.

The United States went after al-Qaida after the group launched attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001. Al-Qaida was also responsible for the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and the attack on the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000. The terrorist organization has also claimed responsibility for attacks around the globe that killed innocent civilians in markets, mosques, subway stations and aircraft.

Benjamin called bin Laden's death a "victory for the United States and for all human beings who seek to live in peace, security and dignity," but added the fight against terrorist groups like al-Qaida is not over.

May 12, 2011

Representative Dan Burton, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia, emphasized the importance of sharing information resources and successful practices. He said the United States “can learn from the approaches taken” by its European allies.

Koumans also underscored the significance of cooperation, calling security “more of a shared responsibility than ever before.”
